Forest Service

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File Code: 3420 **Date:** December 22, 2008
Route To:

Subject: 2008 Douglas-fir Tussock Moth Male Moth Trapping Survey, Sandia Ranger District

To: Cid H Morgan, District Ranger, Sandia Ranger District

As stated in our 3410 letter dated November 5, 2008, no Douglas-fir tussock moth activity was observed on the Sandia RD this year. The combination of no new defoliation and the lack of new cocoons and egg masses along the Sandia Crest National Scenic Byway (Tejano Canyon) and along the Las Huertas road near Las Huertas Canyon and Cañon Media indicate tussock moth larval populations in these areas have collapsed to low, undetectable levels. This letter documents the results of our Douglas-fir tussock moth (DFTM) male moth pheromone trapping survey conducted in these areas during the summer and early fall of 2008. This pheromone-based trapping survey is an early warning system used to monitor male tussock moth populations. Plots averaging 25 or more male moths per trap signal DFTM populations potentially capable of causing visible defoliation within 1-2 years. Once trap captures reach these threshold levels (25 moths per trap), ground sampling for larvae and egg masses become necessary to locate the infestation more precisely and evaluate its status.

The purpose of this survey was to obtain an estimate of the current male tussock moth populations occurring along Tejano Canyon and the Las Huertas road near Las Huertas Canyon and Cañon and compare them with the threshold (25 male moths per trap) to determine whether or not visible defoliation was going occur again in these areas within the next 1-2 years.

Five plots, 5 traps per plot, were placed along Tejano Canyon at Tree Springs Trailhead, and Dry Camp, Balsam Glade, Capulin Spring and Ninemile Picnic Areas; and 3 plots (5 traps per plot) along the Las Huertas road near Las Huertas Canyon and Cañon Media. Of the 40 traps placed, 2 traps were dislodged from their host trees and had to be discarded. Of the 38 traps examined a total of 18 male moths were found. One male moth was trapped in Tejano Canyon (Balsam Glade Picnic Area) and 17 were trapped along the Las Huertas road. The overall trap average for Tejano Canyon and the Las Huertas area was 0.04 and 1.13 moths per trap, respectively. These trap averages are well below the threshold of 25 male moths per trap signaling the threat of visible defoliation occurring within the next 1-2 years.

Based on these results, DFTM-caused defoliation is not expected to occur in either area within the next 1-2 years and possibly longer. If you, or your staff, have any questions, please give me a call at (505) 842-3287 or e-mail me at trogers@fs.fed.us.

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